NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

JOSH STEIN • Governor
DEVDUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary
LISA TUCKER CAULEY • **Division** Director, Human Services

August 12, 2026

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS, SUPERVISORS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS

SUBJECT: ONE-TIME INCREASED CHAFEE (LINKS) FUNDS

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Immediate ☒ Time Sensitive ☐ Information Only

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, LINKS in North Carolina, assists current and former eligible foster care youth and young adults ages 14-21 in achieving self-sufficiency through support services, resources, and LINKS Special Funds.

For SFY 2026-2027, North Carolina Department of Social Services (NCDSS) has been granted additional Chafee funds available to support **eligible** LINKS youth and young adults. To be eligible to receive this funding, a youth or young adult must meet the following three requirements ***as of the date of the one-time allowance disbursement. The youth or young adult must:***

1. Be between the ages 14-20 years old
2. Be eligible for LINKS funding and services
3. Be open for LINKS Services in the Services Information System (SIS) or within PATHNC.

Each county will receive a portion of the one-time special LINKS funding using the same allocation methodology as LINKS funds, based on the number of young people in foster care as of April 30, 2026.

The one-time special LINKS funding must be used for eligible youth and young adults. Counties will have flexibility to determine how best to utilize the funding to meet the individual needs and priorities of eligible young people.

The one-time special LINKS funds provided must be **expended by September 30, 2026**, and counties must complete the following process to ensure that funding was properly utilized.

1. All counties, including PATHNC counties, will submit a separate DSS- 5217 LINKS Reimbursement Form and utilize the “One-Time Special LINKS Funding” column.
Link to form: https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/document/dss-5217-request-for-reimbursement-of-links-special-funds/

2. Submit the separate DSS-5217 Reimbursement Form via email to linksreimbursement@dhhs.nc.gov. Please ensure the subject line includes: **Your county name** *and* **One-Time LINKS Special Funding Reimbursement.**

For additional information about the One-Time Special LINKS Funding, county staff may register to attend one of the following virtual meetings:

Technical Support Call	Thursday, August 13, 2026 1:00PM—2:00PM	https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/2854507465238605058
August LINK-UP Call	Friday, August 14, 2026 Starting at 10:00AM	https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/8417001656102595329

**Please note that the technical assistance call is the dedicated virtual meeting to discuss the one-time special funding. A brief overview of the one-time special funding will also be included during the monthly LINK-Up Call.*

If you have any questions, please contact Tori Marshall, NC State LINKS Coordinator, at Tori.Marshall@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

Adrian W. Daye, MSW
Section Chief, Permanency
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Cc: Lisa Tucker Cauley, Division Director, Human Services, Child, Family, and Adult Regional Support
Donna Fayko, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Services
Tammy Shook, Interim Assistant Deputy Director, Child Welfare Services
William “Ben” Rose, Lead Regional Director
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety
Kimaree Sanders, Section Chief, Regulatory and Licensing
Heather McAllister, Section Chief for Well-Being
Meredith Houchins, Interim Section Chief, Operations
Beth Riley, Child Welfare Financial Officer

Attachments: One-Time Chafee (LINKS) Special Funds Allowance

CWS-60-2026